

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-15, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,832,268 (Anderson, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,279,008 (Tung, et al.) and U.S. Patent 5,694,608 (Shostak). Claim 1 was further rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. Also, the Examiner asked that the Appendices be placed at the end of the specification and before the claims.

With regard to the Appendices, Applicants respectfully note that the MPEP expressly indicates that Appendices can be located after the claims. In particular, in §1121 II, the MPEP states that "Appendices... are not printed if they are contained on pages located after the claims." Clearly, this shows that Appendices can be contained on pages after the claims. In view of this, it is believed that the location of the Appendices after the claims in the present application is an appropriate location.

Independent Claims 1, 6 and 11 are being amended to better define the subject matters of these claims and to address the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112. New claims 16-18, which are dependent from Claim 1, are being added to describe preferred features of the invention.

More specifically, with respect to the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112, this claim is being amended to move the language "visual support means including a quick view means" from the second subparagraph to the fifth subparagraph, which sets forth "a visual support means." The latter phrase thus provides the appropriate antecedent basis for the term "the visual support means" later in the subparagraph. In view of this change, Claim 1 is clear and definite, and the Examiner is asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of the claim under 35 U.S.C. §112.

With regard to the rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103, Applicants respectfully submit that, for the reasons presented below, Claims 1-18 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is, hence, requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow these claims and new Claims 16 and 17.

The present invention, generally, relates to displaying visually certain aspects of objects and complex objects in an object oriented computing environment. One important feature of this invention is the quick view feature, which is discussed on pages 13 and 14 of the application. With this feature, a user is able to show any one column from one table, referred to as the source table, in a view of a second table, referred to as the target table.

Anderson, et al. discusses object oriented programming systems, but, as the Examiner has recognized, does not disclose the type of visual support that is enabled by the present invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the Shostak patent represents prior art with respect to quick views. It is important to point out, though, that Shostak, in column 10, lines 15 -24, specifically teaches that the invention described in Shostak does not apply to relational databases linked by foreign keys. In contrast, with the present invention (see page 12, line 24-32 of the application), normalization is defined specifically as involving a relational database with tables linked by foreign keys. Consequently, this aspect of the invention is completely distinct from the teaching of the Shostak invention. Beyond that, the cited reference in the Shostak patent for quick views uses those two words, but in fact does not talk about adding columns from a customer table to an orders table. There is no place in the Shostak patent where it describes providing a list of all orders with each one enriched with its customer data.

As for the assertion that the Tung patent teaches computed columns because it talks about numeric data, Applicants respectfully submit that Tung does not teach all that it has been cited for. All database systems allow for the definition of single fields with different data types, including numeric. The computed fields capability of the preferred embodiment of the present invention is described (bottom of page 14 and top of page 15) as allowing up to four columns to be combined in a user created formula. This seems to be far beyond any capability alluded to in the Tung or Shostak patents.

Claims 1, 6 and 11 describe important differences between the claims and the prior art. More specifically, claim 1 sets forth the limitations that the quick view means includes a custom editor including a list of database tables, each of the database tables including one data field that is in another of the database tables, and mapping means to map from each of the database tables to another of the database tables using one of the data fields of said each of said database tables, whereby a designer can select which data of one of the database tables is included as a quick view column in a view of a second of the database tables. Claims 6 and 11, analogously, set forth the steps of including in the quick view support a custom editor and mapping means, as described above, for the same purpose — that is, whereby a designer can select which data of one of the database tables is included in a quick view column in a view of a second of the database tables.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 6 and 11 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, Claims 1, 6 and 11 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-5 and 16-18 are dependent from Claim 1 and are allowable therewith. Also, claims 7-10 are dependent from Claim 6 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 12-15 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 11. The Examiner is, consequently, respectfully asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow these claims and new Claims 16-18.

In light of the above discussion, the Examiner is requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112 and the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow Claims 1-18. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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